

Walz Amendments Included in Intelligence Authorization Bill

Washington, DC – Today, the House passed an amendment Rep. Walz introduced to ensure that veterans who are experts in keeping our country safe are treated fairly in the security clearance process.

“Veterans have the kind of expertise and experience that is valuable to the intelligence community,” said Walz. “When determining if a veteran is granted a security clearance, I want to make sure the intelligence community makes those decisions based not only on suitability but also on the unique experiences these heroes had as a result of their service. Our nation’s veterans do not want preferential treatment, but it is up to us to provide them a fair playing field when it comes to getting a job in the national security field.”

Mr. Walz’s amendment requires the intelligence community to train their security clearance adjudicators on all combat injuries, including PTSD, affecting combat veterans.

HR 2701, the Intelligence Authorization Act supports our intelligence officers by improving oversight of covert actions, directing essential funding for efforts abroad, and boosting foreign language capabilities to ensure that officers have the critical tools they need to carry out operations around the world.

The bill boosts funding for language programs that are crucial to gathering intelligence abroad and strengthens recruitment efforts to attract the best possible talent. It also contains critical provisions to enhance the nation's cybersecurity efforts and to better fight the proliferation of WMD's around the world. The bill increases funding for intelligence efforts in Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan, and funds efforts to address emerging national security issues in places like Africa and Latin America.

The bill also makes important reforms to the oversight of covert actions, creating an Inspector General for the intelligence community and requiring that IG to audit each covert action. It reforms the process for notifying the intelligence committee of covert actions so that Congress can more effectively perform its oversight role and prohibits private contractors from conducting interrogations of detainees in CIA custody and requires that all detainee interrogations be videotaped.